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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
EA-12 FRB-01 INR-10 IO-14 NEA-10 NSAE-00 ICA-20
OPIC-06 SP-02 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00
OMB-01 SS-15 MEEO-01 AF-10 HA-05 PA-02 /141 W
----------090999 280636Z /17
R 271100Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5365

UNCLAS PARIS 23583

USOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, LILLIAN), FR, EAID, ELAB, OECD
SUBJECT: MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT: THE ROLE OF WOMEN

REF: PARIS 21311

1. MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT TO OECD OFFERED SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SUBJECT OF THE ROLE OF WOMEN TO BE RAISED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SAHEL PROGRAM, AND IN THE WORK OF OECD.

2. IN HER CALL ON THE SECRETARY GENERAL, MISS LILLIAN ALERTED THE SECGEN THAT SHE WOULD BE ASKING QUESTIONS DURING THE SAHEL BRIEFING ABOUT WHAT VARIOUS DONORS WERE DOING IN REGARD TO THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THEIR RESPECIVE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS PROMPTED THE SECGEN TO INVITE GASS, DIRECTOR OF THE SOCIAL AFFAIRS, MANPOWER AND EDUCATION DIRECTORATE TO BE PRESENT AT THE SAHEL BRIEFING AND TO BE PREPARED TO MAKE A BRIEF STATEMENT ON WHAT OECD WAS DOING IN REGARD TO THE ROLE OF WOMEN. GASS, WHO PREFACED HIS REMARKS AS IMPROMPTU, MADE THE GENERAL
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OBSERVATION THAT THE OECD ITSELF HAS A VERY KEEN INTEREST IN AND IS TRYING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE ISSUE OF HOW TO IMPROVE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE ORGANIZATION BECAUSE, AS HE NOTED, OF THEIR EDUCATION LEVEL AND INTEREST IN DOING MORE THAN JUST SECRETARIAL WORK. GASS THEN SPOKE OF THE WORK OF WP6, INCLUDING THE REPORT WITH PROPOSALS TO BE RELEASED SHORTLY. GASS

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COMMENTED THAT THE ISSUE IS NOT ONLY A QUESTION OF FORMAL RIGHTS BUT OF DEEP-SEATED ATTITUDES OF MEMBER GOVERNMENTS, USING AS AN EXAMPLE THE DILEMMA GOVERNMENTS FACE WITH RISING UNEMPLOYMENT WHICH IN PART IS CAUSED BY THE ENTRY OF WOMEN IN THE LABOR FORCE. HE NOTED THAT MEMBER COUNTRIES ARE PRESENTLY EXAMINING THE WHOLE QUESTION OF BIASES AND THE NEED FOR EQUAL RIGHTS IN SOCIAL SECURITY, "A VERY DEEP-SEATED PROBLEM AS WE ARE LEARNING IN THIS ORGANIZATION." GASS CONCLUDED WITH REFERENCE TO PROBLEMS OF OTHER GROUPS SUCH AS THE YOUNG, MIGRANTS, AND THE AGED, INDICATING THAT OECD WAS WORKING VERY HARD ON WHAT COULD BE CALLED A MORE FLEXIBLE SOCIETY WHERE GREATER OPPORTUNITIES WOULD EXST FOR WOMEN AS IN THE CASE OF EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT.

3. IN THE SAHEL BRIEFING, MISS LILLIAN ASKED MOST COUNTRY BRIEFERS IN WHAT WAYS THEIR RESPECTIVE AID PROGRAMS WERE ADDRESSING PROBLEMS OF WOMEN. THE U.S. BREFER, DAVD SHEAR, CITED A SPECIFIC PROJECT IN UPPER VOLTA AS ONE APPROACH, AND MME. DE LATTRE OF THE CLUB SECRETARIAT DESCRIBED PARTICULAR NEEDS OF WOMEN IN THE SAHEL. IN A BRIEF AND COLORFUL EXCHANGE WITH MISS LILLIAN, THE DUTCH BRIEFER, MS. BADIN GHIBJEN, INDICATED THAT HER GOVERNMENT'S AID PROGRAM ACROSS THE BOARD AND NOT LIMITED JUST TO THE SAHEL OR TO ANY SPECIFIC SECTOR,
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PLACES EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.

4. IN GREETING OECD EMPLOYEES, MISS LILLIAN MADE SPECIAL NOTE OF QUESTIONS SHE ASKED OF THE BRIEFERS DURINGTHE SAHEL BRIEFING AND IN REFERENCE TO OECD, STATED THAT SHE "HOPED THEY WOULD DO WELL FOR YOU HERE AS WE ARE GOING TO DO IN THE SAHEL COUNTRIES."

5. COMMENT: MISS LILLIAN'S REFRESHING STYLE AND REMARKS (WITHOUT USE OF PREPARED TALKING POINTS) CLEARLY UNDERSCORED THE ADMINISTRATION'S INTEREST IN IMPROVING THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND WILL BE HELPFUL IN THE MISSION'S CONTINUING EFFORTS BOTH TO STRENGTHEN OECD'S WORK ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY AND TO GAIN GREATER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY OF PENSION RIGHTS FOR WOMEN WITHIN OECD.
SALZMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WOMEN, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PARIS23583
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780309-0753
Format: TEL
From: PARIS USOECD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780714/aaaaalnn.tel
Line Count: 112
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1633d76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 PARIS 21311
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1867937
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MISS LILLIAN\'S VISIT: THE ROLE OF WOMEN
TAGS: OVIP, EAID, ELAB, FR, OECD, (CARTER, LILLIAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1633d76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014